

KEY NOTES

PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE RECREATION AND SERVICES

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The Basics of Effective Employee Organizations

An employee organization forms its roots within the immediate work force group. Departmental, shift, or division group clusters represented by an elected representative and with its top management supervisor serving as advisor establishes the foundation for structuring the association. It sets the stage for improved communications and effective employee relations. From this grass roots formation, the association can develop the organization table for the inclusion of group representatives' input to overall association boards, committees, and officer representation. When all management becomes interested and involved with the association, the mutual benefits derived are most rewarding.

Recreational activities and social events can be developed either for total membership or group participation with each segment of the association lending its support for departmental and total membership involvement. Another sector of the organization will then develop from this basic formation, that of special interest groups involving the total membership and providing cultural, athletic, social and educational activities of specific interests. From these groups, elected officers will also be represented in the administrative body of the organization. Although each group is self-reliant and retains an independence of operation, the overall organizational policies and procedures are followed.

Employee organizations can be formed with any number of employees. However, organizational tables vary from company to company. If you are interested in setting up an employee association or club, NIRA can recommend other companies of your size that will be happy to provide you with outlines of their clubs' structures. NIRA will also assist you in reviewing or discussing your plans for establishing an employee association.

What Makes an Organization Successful?

Organizations of all types, be they business, social, or of a fraternal nature, are dependent on consistent and well-organized leadership. Supervisors, officers, chairpersons and committees, as important as they are, do change more frequently and are less experienced than the executives at the helm. One can judge the effectiveness of almost any organization by its top paid director and staff. Many times the officers of an organization are just beginning to learn the basic fundamentals of their jobs when elections are held and a new crew takes over, only to go through the same learning processes.

There is no group that can make the degree of progress essential to consistent growth and development without an effective, paid director or staff that offers its guidance and expertise to these operations. A good director knows his or her place in working with officers, committees, and supervisors, always crediting them and working in their behalf for successful results that reflect on the total organization's image.

Achievement Adult Style

A well-developed employee association is able to reap the same benefits that are achieved through Junior Achievement--but at an adult level. Is there a better place to teach business procedures and methods than through the employee activities programs? Here purchasing, selling, budgeting, accounting, advertising, speaking, organization, delegation and managing can be taught through leisure-time activities administration.

Stamp Collecting

Stamp collecting is a hobby that provides a common denominator that can unite people, both young and old, from many walks of life. It's a good investment over the long run, and a hobby that can be a casual affair or one that leads the hobbyist into a prolonged study of the field and down the philatelic path to becoming a stamp scholar. One or two enthusiasts can generate considerable interest for the novice collectors and recruit new participants for stamp collecting. Once five or more employees meet to discuss, exchange, study and mount stamps, a stamp club is in the making.

Coin Collecting--One of the Oldest Hobbies

Coins were first minted by the Lydians (today's Turks) about 700 B.C. Ancient Romans were known to collect coins a few centuries later. Collecting coins offers the challenge of search and the increasing values of coin collecting. The growing interest in collecting accounts for the disappearance each year of a large number of

coins. This also sweetens the market value and stimulates the hunt for certain minted coins. The design and execution of dies is a highly-skilled job, and coins in good condition should be regarded as art objects. There are numerous books on coins and coin collecting available in bookstores and libraries to help newcomers in this hobby. Local coin dealers are usually most cooperative and willing to act as advisors and instructors for newly-formed coin clubs.

Gifts for Employees

Gifts given employees by their employers are another means of recognition for length of service or performance, and reflects the company's public relations efforts. Although service award programs are conducted at most large corporations, very often management fails to list all the awards being given such as an additional week of vacation, increased insurance, company stock options and so on. The bonus or cash remembrance often becomes expected and not related as an award. Profit sharing is most likely to achieve what bonuses and cash incentive awards were intended to accomplish.

Some companies provide a small token gift on the employee's birthday or starting date with the company such as a small birthday cake, flower arrangement, book, luncheon or candy or fruit basket at a cost of \$5 to \$10. At special awards ceremonies, honor is bestowed upon individuals who have given special service to their community and a credit to their company. Only small tokens of appreciation are given. The emphasis is on the publicity given the awardee. The important factor concerning all awards is the promotion given them and the involvement of management. At Christmas time, food items again seem to be the favorite of all gifts given to employees. Popular are holiday luncheons and dinners provided the employees and their spouses by departments or divisions of the company. Here, again, management serves as host and benefactor.

Husbands and Wives Employed

Because there are so many couples employed today, there is less time available to devote to the home. More meals are eaten out and more social activities and entertainment are found outside the home. Because of this, employee recreation programs and services offered by the company become a most important benefit. The degree of interest taken regarding working couples has a great bearing upon their job retention and productivity. Some companies seeking career people have helped the new employee's spouse find employment either within their company or elsewhere.

Program Ideas and Helps

An annual session for the program chairpersons and their committees could be held to encourage new ideas and programs. Start a file of programs, tournaments, games and so on which could be used as idea stimulators. Taking the calendar month by month, discuss what types of social, athletic, educational and service events could be featured. As previously held events are suggested, request new ideas for variations on the event. Pass out listings of companies and agents that can supply or service various events and provide each committee member with an outline of promotional techniques and desirable ways to obtain participation or box office sales.

Credit Card Fever

The credit card fever has reached a critical stage for thousands of people caught up in a bankruptcy trap. Most of these folks need help in handling money. Discussions on family financial management could prove to be both educational and beneficial to employees and their families. Specialists in finance, budgeting, bankruptcy and home and family business procedures could offer employees their advice on a one-to-one basis or through seminars offered by the company or employee association.

Physical Fitness Programs Prevalent in Industry

There is an increase of employee physical fitness programs being introduced in companies not having had any form of employee recreational programs in the past. Employee memberships in YMCA, YWCA and commercial health clubs are also being offered. Full physical programming and periodical medical examinations are reducing absenteeism due to illness and aiding in the early discovery of physical conditions that can be corrected at that time. It is difficult to accurately measure the total effectiveness of any one sector of the recreation program for so many elements play a part in the reduction of job fatigue, boredom, absenteeism, sickness and injuries. There is little doubt, however, that a total recreational program properly administered can be a major factor in establishing higher morale, greater productivity and reduced physical and mental health problems.

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In-House Resources

Today, the very survival of a company's hobby club, sports activity or other special event often depends upon an overlooked in-house resource -- people. Utilization of volunteers from within the company becomes increasingly important as pressure on company budgets affects the funding of programs. Volunteer participation not only saves company dollars, but it also gives employees a greater sense of involvement in company activities.

Increased attendance figures and genuine support of recreational programs are a direct result of effective promotion. Though bulletin boards, posters, newsletters and public address systems are valuable forms of promotion, word of mouth advertising can prove to be even more successful. Enthusiastic employees, through casual conversation and suggestion, can often persuade fellow workers to support recreational activities and programs through this personal mode of promotion.

For example, Vince Alit of Syncrude Ltd. in Canada achieved successful results by utilizing in-house resources for his company's outdoor hockey rink. A price tag of more than \$350 on new goal posts from local suppliers forced Vince to search for another alternative. By mentioning his dilemma to some employees, within two weeks, goal posts arrived -- free of charge. Evidently, several department members on their own time, got together and produced a welcomed result -- goal posts for the upcoming hockey season which they built themselves.

In-house resources, (in this case, people,) proved to be an economical way to land more successful recreational programs and activities for Vince Alit. Through personal promotion and volunteer work any company's budget can overcome the obstacles which these inflationary times present.

What the New Year Brings

1981 will be another year of inflation and budget cutting. Industrial recreation and employee services has an option: to become the important factor in employee relations, or to exist as merely a fun and games department, most likely to be eliminated. At times when fewer dollars are spent and less received for them, people begin to congregate and seek group advantages. It reflects in purchasing, socializing and other benefits which are only obtainable through group unity. Also with rising prices, fewer dollars are left for the average family's recreational interests. Therefore, this becomes the time when employee services meets a greater need. It's a time when many beneficial opportunities can be programmed which are economical and profitable for both employee and employer.

Most important, in achieving these desired results, is developing a closer communicative and concerned interest with the work force. When employees -- including management -- share in this mutual co-operative effort, the workers' feelings, jobs, product quality and profits improve. The spirit of harmonious cooperation becomes an epidemic and affects all phases of the business operations benefitting everyone in the corporation.

Profit from Your Leisure

Recreation directors should review the eight page article in the July 1980 issue of Money magazine entitled, "Hobbyists Get Down to Business." This idea stimulator introduces ways that pay in hobbies and play. This may be of special interest to employers seeking hobbies and crafts to supplement their retirement. But there is certainly room in this marketplace for active employers interested in moonlighting while recreating.

Two more articles in the same issue "Home Improvement to Better Your Lot," and "A Gentleman Farmer's Almanac," raise additional interest in profits from leisure.

Industrial recreation covers a vast field of endeavors. For recreation is not "sweat shirt and whistle" programming alone. Many folks find their recreational interests in hobbies, study, cultural interests and consulting and developing income projects. Still there are large groups always seeking volunteers to help serve organizations, institutions and civic involvements for no appreciable income recognition.

Ten Tips for the Party Chairman

As 1981 unfolds, the party chairman -- whether the recreation director or a volunteer employee, should re-evaluate past social events. The following are some interesting tips for those looking towards a better year.

1. Stage your party as if you were giving it in your home. The only difference should be in the numbers attending.
2. Schedule the time when each activity takes place.
3. Plan the party for the participants, not the committee. Remember to consider age groups, sex, occupational status, educational levels, etc.
4. Prepare the room or hall to accommodate the participants and maintain surveillance of extra needs such as chairs, tables, settings, etc. Keep your weather-eye peeled on the room temperature.
5. See that coat room service is adequate.
6. Make sure exits, exhibits, reserved areas, restrooms and other facilities are marked and easily located.
7. Check the lighting and public address system, not once, but several times before the party. Remember, people's clothing absorbs sound, so allow for the cushioning and increase the volume.
8. Pay attention to small details such as lighted candles, name tags, food kept warm, congested areas and courteous service.
9. The most important factor of any party is the host and hostess, or master of ceremonies who grandstands the entire event and keeps it moving. You can include introductions, jokes, stories and announcements.
10. Keep a main focal point of interest like a stage or platform, well decorated. The entrance is most important as it conditions the participants for the party.

...A Few More Tips on Decorating...

Often, because of a lack of time, party decorations are scarce and don't appear on your list of necessities. Yet, the music will be livelier, the conversation brighter and the whole party more successful when the rooms are attractively decorated to suit the particular occasion. Because they are only temporary, expensive decorations are not necessary. A large room can be too costly to decorate in its

entirety. Plan on making them easy to put up and display and just as easy to take down.

The focal points of interest and first impression spots such as stage, entrance ways, main aisles and entertainment centers of the room are the areas to concentrate on for decorations. Small decorations in a large room are a waste of time and money. Plan on large decorative effects spotted here and there but of an inexpensive manner such as corrugated board panels, wrapping paper wall coverings, crepe paper streamers or balloons. Even cartons or boxes can be converted into decorative pieces. However, keep in mind the possibility of fire hazards your decorations may present, and check with your fire department for regulations. Fire resistant sprays are available and any other suggestions they may have to offer will ensure a safe party surrounded by enhancing decorations.

Alcohol -- Caloric Facts and Fiction

Last year 156 million barrels of beer were consumed by folks from coast to coast. This roughly amounts to 22 gallons per person, and since some adults and most children could be excluded from the figure, the average must be higher. But contrary to some believers, a 12 ounce glass of beer has less calories than the same amount of soft drinks. The average beer contains 150 calories per 12 ounce glass and light beers have 96 calories or less.

The alcoholic content of domestic beer is less than other alcoholic beverages, usually between 3 and 7 percent. As for wine, the alcoholic content varies but is in the 20 percent range. Wines will vary in calories depending upon the types -- table wines, 3 ounce glass, 75 calories, white muscatel or port wine will be 165 calories per 3 ounce glass.

Of course mixed drinks contain a higher caloric count. An Alexander has 225 calories, a Manhattan goes 175 for 3 oz. and a 2½ ounce Martini will easily surpass the 95 calories level.

When we advocate physical fitness programs, it is essential that we also include the items which go down the hatch to our stomachs. We should also be concerned about what kind of air and smoke our lungs are enduring. And undoubtedly, we should be counting the number of calories we accumulate each day.

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Productive Organization Aids

Associations, like businesses, need to train and offer guidelines to officers and supervising chairpersons. Some employee associations under company sponsorship have given as much as two days of briefing on company time for association officers. This is just another indication of management concern and interest in employee relations.

One company conducts an officers' institute for one day and concludes the seminar with an officers' evening banquet which the officers' work supervisors also attend.

A top company executive gives the keynote address honoring outgoing officers and welcoming the new. The banquet features management's interest in employee services and activities and pays special tributes with awards for "Distinguished Service", retiring presidents and the certificates of merit and achievement. The master of ceremonies always is chosen from one of management's supervisors, and the outgoing president gives a short address recognizing the new president and his or her officers.

Though the activities or employee services director does not take part in the banquet ceremonies, he or she oversees the preparations, promotions, arrangements, agenda and services of the event.

However, the Employee Services Director does take a major role in the officers' institute sessions by selecting instructors, preparing the Officers' Guidebook, job description folders, etc. These sessions are divided into various officer responsibility areas in which each officer and committee head holds separate sessions following a general briefing session that all attend. Old and new officers discuss problem areas and methods to improve association participation and interests. The financial sector of the institute is explained and forms distributed for use during the briefing of all officers involved in budgets and handling of funds.

We believe all organizations should conduct institutes or learning sessions for new, as well as old officers to assist and act as advisors to the instructor. Holding a teaching and learning event of this type will prove to be most productive in eliminating numerous mistakes of

incoming officers during a new year. When properly organized and conducted, it is, in itself, a step toward leadership training in business methods and procedures that is bound to carry over in daily working habits.

Event Success or Failure Can Be Result of Location

The location, be it a hall or a playing field, plays an important part in any activity. Much like garments we wear, appearance directly affects the type of reception we get. Most people would lose confidence in their doctor if he wore overalls in his office. For first impressions are so deeply engraved in our appraisal of the person, place or object, it becomes difficult to reserve impressionable attitudes.

For example, a committee which is planning an event catered to a select formal audience, must stage the event in an appropriate facility. The committee must develop the program to meet the market they wish to reach.

Also, most believe that athletes are psychologically affected by their planning conditions. The participant's feelings affect his or her performance, and the performance, of course, determines the spectators' response. Championship material requires championship facilities. Like actors on a stage, each must play the part he or she represents. And it is the direction and setting which encourages both actor and audience to interact accordingly.

Many added impressionable tactics are introduced to further these reactions. Such details include the playing of the national anthem before a game, the moving orchestration before a curtain rises, announcing the spectators as they arrive, cheer leaders, etc. We call this a conditioning of the event -- an element of professional programming. When all is right for the audience we serve, we can be fairly certain of a successful event.

The Employee Newsletter

An employee newsletter is an important part of the total employee services program. In addition to providing an excellent activity in itself for employee involvement and contributions, it serves as a medium for publicizing the various employee activities and services, and plays a most effective role in recognizing and honoring the volunteer's leadership.

Producing the publication is not a difficult proposition for it may be as simple or as elaborate as you wish to make it. The job of the newsletter staff is to collect the news and prepare it for publication. Articles should be previewed by the director as well as the volunteer editor, giving attention to the benefits the paper should serve. When first engaging in such publications, it is better to publish the newsletter quarterly. Then, as the volunteer staff becomes more efficient and able to devote the time required, it can

assume more frequent publication. The newsletter receives better results when it is mailed directly to the employee's home. Also, a well received publication serves the company as a means to promote or explain company functions, policies, or community involvements

Special interest groups, such as retiree clubs, can also publish a newsletter serving the same purpose and distribute or mail it to their membership along with meeting notices. The special interest groups which have large memberships and considerable activities related to one particular interest, really need to publish some sort of newsletter monthly. As a help and another educational interest, short courses in publishing newsletters and papers can be offered to interested employees.

Las Vegas Party is a Sure Bet

One of the most popular adult activities you can promote is a "Monte Carlo Nite" or "Las Vegas Party." The party is staged as a gambling casino where play money in thousand dollar denominations is sold or given to each participant to play blackjack, roulette, craps, horserace, big ten wheel, dice wheel, bingo and other games of chance. All of the games should be operated by committees versed in the operations.

House persons travel from game to game relieving them of surplus money and refurbishing the bank when needed. At a stated closing time for the games, an area providing a hock shop and an auction is open for exchanging play money for things in the hock shop or participating in the auction for larger or more costly items. Often, a jail cell is erected in the center of the room and two or three Keystone cops circulate among the participants arresting various members for gambling, disturbing the peace, swearing and so on. A clown judge or justice of the peace stationed near the cell tries each violator and sets the fine and court costs before release.

In larger cities, concession suppliers may provide games, instructions and supplies on a rental basis. Some suppliers will operate games and conduct the auction for a percentage of the sales or admissions. Las Vegas Parties almost always attract a great attendance and usually prove to be moneymakers for the employee organization.

Personnel Administration: A Valuable Concentration

It is anticipated that business and industry will be seeking a minimum of approximately 83,750 new employees for personnel administration by 1985. This results in the increased need for employee services and industrial recreation directors as this is usually a sector of personnel administration. Students of recreation or an intern working within the industrial recreation field would find it to his or her advantage to enroll in personnel administration courses in addition to recreation and physical education classes. There

is a definite trend in business and industry to establish employee services administrators who can also direct the recreational aspects of personnel. Because of this, personnel administration would prove to be a valuable concentration for the serious recreation student.

America's Goal: Improvement in Quality of Life

"Increased interest and participation in exercise and sport are products of our growing leisure" this was the message delivered to the White House Symposium on Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine in an address given by George A. Sheehan, M.D. According to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, Sheehan "has emerged as the unofficial philosopher and poet laureate of the running movement of America."

Dr. Sheehan promoted his thesis that Americans have achieved material abundance and are now embarking in a search for personal excellence and virtue. He also suggested that fitness enthusiasts are motivated more by a desire to improve the quality of their lives than by a desire to extend the length of their lives.

In his lecture, chronic fatigue was cited by Dr. Sheehan as the most prevalent symptom witnessed in his patients. He added that the best prescription for that condition is physical activity. "You have to use your body," he said, "but the physician often thinks of the body as a last resort."

Commerical Recreation and Physical Fitness Centers Meeting a Need

People are becoming more aware of their health and recreational requirements. The increase in commerical health and recreational facilities in the past five years indicates a phenomenal growth in this new industry. It is especially noticeable in heavily industrialized communities where tennis, racquetball, handball, physical fitness and exercise complexes are being offered on a membership or term payment plan.

There are elaborate, full-service facilities such as the Houstonian Foundation Fitness Center located within minutes of Houston, Texas' major business center which offers more than just a facility attraction. The Houstonian Fitness Center adjoins a 1,500 acre memorial park enabling their members to take advantage of the park's hiking, jogging and bicycle trails. The appeal of this center is based upon preventable disease and physical fatigue therapy. The center has a complete staff of qualified specialists to program the activities and professionally meet the requirements of a full physical fitness enterprise. Employee group memberships are often made available to industry by various commercial recreation and health clubs -- an option for employee fitness that is clearly worth looking into.

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Health Clubs Are Becoming More and More Attractive

The site of a physical fitness center used to be one of a high school gymnasium complex with the sweatshirt and whistle enthusiast issuing orders like a line sargeant in basic training while odors that would remind one of a camel stall on a hot day in Saudi Arabia permeate the air. It has taken the competitive commercial health club to introduce some drastic change in facilities and services to this old stereotype. Today there are 1,300 clubs affiliated with the International Physical Fitness Association, and probably, four times this number of commercial enterprises offering beautiful health club facilities, professional guidance and instruction.

In the typical health club of today, for one low-cost membership, members can avail themselves of facilities such as: completely equipped gyms, tennis courts, steam rooms, whirlpool baths, swimming pools, hydro-massage pools, saunas, sunlamp booths, racquetball courts, private lockers and showers, massage service, jogging track, obstacle courses, child care centers, refreshment and health food bars, game rooms and lounges--all arranged in the most attractive and fashionable decore.

As these clubs become more and more attractive to the public, you can expect additional services to be offered. Some extras may include more personal and professional attention given to clients, more related aids such as diet centers, barber and beauty shop service, food service and clothing and cosmetic needs. It's possible that the health club will be the hub of a full-scale family needs center and mall. Industry and business interested in providing such services to employees may be taking another look at what facilities and personnel will be required in the very near future. They may also discover that all the costs need not be one-sided, as employees will share in the costs and the services they desire most.

Your Bulletin Board

Bulletin boards are the display windows of employee communications. Regardless of what other communicative media are used, the bulletin boards remain the most visible on a daily basis and, if properly maintained,

they can acquire the largest reading audience. The messages carried there reflect the interest, concern and attitudes of those issuing the bulletins. If the message is worth posting at all, it is worth the time to present it properly and attractively. Make sure that it is carefully written, clear and precise but never a full page of copy.

Bulletins are like daily newspapers -- after 24 hours, they begin to lose their readership. Most bulletins are dead after three or four days. If a board isn't changed weekly, posted properly, displayed attractively and professionally presented, it can only become a wasted piece of valuable media.

Adventurous Ways to Keep Fit

The Appalachian Trail is one of the many that offer hikers a variety and adventure. There are 2000 miles of footpaths on the Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia. Write the Appalachian Trail Conference, Box 236, Harpers Ferry, W. Virginia 25424. Published are a number of booklets with general information including detailed maps and guides for each section of the trail.

Biking through the countryside is another enjoyable group activity. Two excellent books on bicycle trails are the American Biking Atlas and Touring Guide by Sue Browder and Warren Asa's North American Bicycle Atlas.

River rafting is one experience in the great outdoors that offers plenty of challenge and excitement. Rafting on the Youghiogheny River is an example of eastern rafting at its finest. For a comprehensive look at rafting, read River Touring by Verne Huser (\$4.95 - Henry Regnery Co., Chicago.)

Pre-Retirement Planning

A new home seminar course on Retirement Life-Planning is now being offered by NHO Consultants, Inc., 6687 Audubon Road, Castle Park, Holland, Michigan 49423. Phone: 616/335-3237. It has been developed by a former personnel professional, R. Nicholas Hoyer, president of NHO. The course has received considerable praise from such companies as The Chicago Transit Authority; Richfood Inc., of Richmond, VA; Montgomery Elevator Co., of Moline, IL; Noland Company of Newport News, VA and others. Based upon the behavioral research from over 650 retired families, the course provides pre-retirement lesson plans to be completed at home by employees and their spouses. Pre-retirement assistance is a most beneficial service for both the company and its employees. A preview evaluation sample is available for \$50.00. For further information contact Mr. Hoyer at the above address.

Recreational Needs to be Met

There are many opportunities within the industrial recreation profession, as well as other channels of recreation to explore new ideas. Some of these suggestions could result in profitable ventures, not to mention a little known or non-existent need within the field of leisure time activities. Presently, there seems to be a great need for such things as:

- a poor man's country club facility at a low cost family membership rate
- individual and family discount rates for recreational activities and accommodations, particularly during off-season or low participation periods
- more instructional events for enticing newcomers to the various established activities
- more direct community involvement on the part of employees scheduled in a manner that working persons participate more easily
- closer ties with schools of learning to further the growth of education and special interests for adults
- more total family activities to stimulate the family as a whole
- greater employer interest and participation in employee leisure time and service programs
- more attention given to passive recreational interests programming
- developing a balanced program of interests and skills to reach the greatest number of people
- a program to provide physical education in all categories for all age groups
- more attention given retiree groups to maintain a closer relationship with the company and its employees
- a concentrated effort to provide a variety of time and money saving employee services
- a proper eating and nutrition program starting with reduced prices for smaller servings of food

In taking these ideas into consideration, the employer can look forward to a stronger and healthier satisfied work force.

Programming Parties

Social activities can be among the most difficult to program and often require considerable thought and research. The twelve months of the year provide themes to build upon, beginning with a New Year's party and closing the year with a family Christmas event. Every social event must take into consideration the age group, common interests and the level of cultural and intellectual experience of the people which it serves. Very seldom does any one social event attract all employees. Even the most popular, such as an annual picnic cannot score a hundred percent on employee participation. However, parties that include some or all members of the employee's family have greater appeal and fewer repercussions than those restricted to employees only. Guest privileges that restrict the number of guests an employee may invite, has an ego effect upon the employee who is acting as a self-appointed host or hostess for his or her invited friends. The unexpected agenda of parties creates more interest and enjoyment than knowledge of every detail of the party in advance.

Many social events fail to attract participants due to a repetitiveness in nature each year. To increase participation for future events, introduce new party themes and terminate the party when the interest of the group is at its highest point. Never extend the time -- have them leave wanting more. Also, avoid games or contests that may embarrass participants. Pre-arrange any such actions or stunts with participants as entertainment on their part.

Successful social activities do not just happen; they require careful planning and organization. When any company party is well thought out, employee interest and attendance is sure to increase.

Employee Recognition Most Important

Every opportunity to give employees a pat on the back for their efforts and interests in improving the image of the company, and productivity is essential to good business. According to an item in WESTINGHOUSE NEWS a Westinghouse Order of Merit Award has been initiated. The award, in the form of a distinguished service plaque, was recently given to one employee for his contribution of technical expertise, foresight and judgment which led to achievements that were major factors in establishing the Westinghouse Aerospace Electrical Division as the world leader in electrical power systems for aircraft. The award is one which is based upon a rigid performance evaluation. The last such award was given in 1973.

Awards such as these are cherished and important only when they become difficult to obtain. Westinghouse makes such occasions of presentations a special event which further adds to the value and respect the award portrays. This type of employee service recognition is just another step toward building a more cooperative and appreciative work force.

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An Eye on Safety

This summer, when you choose a pair of sunglasses, choose them wisely. Sunglasses should allow for maximum vision while providing protection against glare. Fashion, writes the New York Times, should come last on your list of priorities. For your own vision safety the newspaper suggests:

- Wear sunglasses during prolonged or intense exposure to the sun.
- Make sure lenses are shatterproof.
- If you wear prescription glasses, get your prescription ground into sunglasses.
- Even non-prescription lenses should be ground and polished. This prevents the headaches, nausea and eye strain that can be caused by distortion.
- Sunglasses should transmit no more than 30 percent of the light. Select glasses that transmit only 10 to 15 percent for use on the beach.
- Lenses should be so dark that you cannot see your eyes through them when looking in a mirror.
- Grey lenses protect best against glare and distort color the least. Brown and green lenses are also good. Stay away from red, blue and yellow lenses, which distort color perception and may let through too much light.
- Lenses which lighten and darken automatically may not become dark enough in bright sunshine to be effective. Also, upon coming indoors, these lenses may remain dark and interfere with your vision.
- Don't wear sunglasses inside or at night. This habit can lead to permanently impaired night vision.

Programming Today and Tomorrow

Two generations ago, the average work week was comprised of six ten-hour days and time off included a week's vacation and less than five holidays. The average employee had an eighth grade education or less. Leisure hours were few and confined to one or two major recreational interests. Those who entered sports or other recreational interests strived to excel and be recognized for their superiority and perfection. Today, however, we enjoy considerably more leisure time, we have raised our levels of education and are exposed to a much wider variety of

leisure time interests.

The average college-aged man and woman are now sharing in activities that were not always available to either their parents or grandparents. The element of perfection in the wide range of leisure activities no longer is possible to achieve when engaging in the array of recreational opportunities available. It appears that the vast majority of our new generation primarily wish to engage in a variety of activities and seeks to be well informed and able to participate with some degree of skill or ability.

All of this has a bearing on how we, in the employee activities administrative roles, develop our programs.

The next generation will be even more intent upon a wider range of interests. As distances are becoming shorter, communications media increasing and schools focusing attention on varied lifestyles available to their students, there will be increased participation in every recreational endeavor. It will also create the need for more recreation facilities, especially those catering to restrictive membership. Here, business and industry has the opportunity to fulfill the needs and benefits that the investment in such facilities and programs will assure.

Personal Likes and Dislikes

There always remains an element of personal preference or personal disinterest in a director's attitude toward programs offered employees. The more professional director, however, displays evidence of greater restraint in his other personal feelings concerning the development of programs. Regardless of this there are often programs which directly reflect the director's personal taste. Unfortunately, when this happens, a major part of a well-balanced program can be either short-changed on funds provided or may not be encouraged to develop.

Some directors exhaust their budget on the personal preferences of top management alone. One such case involved a plant manager who had tennis courts erected on the company site primarily for his and several top bosses' pleasures. He insisted that all employees must play tennis if they sought his favors. In another situation, the labor relations director automatically disapproved of any added employee benefits unless they were negotiated and written into the contract.

Other directors are hesitant to offer additional benefits because they may require more of their own time and effort. Still others ignore any change in the program for fear of confrontation with superiors. So much revolves around personal likes and dislikes that even within certain circles of employees, the more vocal and sometimes authoritative individuals insist that the director run the recreation program in accordance with their interests.

Unfortunately, some activities and services that provide greater participation do not always have a persuasive person to champion the cause. Dr. Harry Edgren, a former consultant to NIRA, often stated that a vast majority of people never know exactly what they may like;

therefore, the director must be innovative but not dictatorial. He stressed a good educator and promoter of industrial programs is one who is concerned with the majority of participants. Some suggestions catch on immediately and become well established, while other ideas need more time to develop. One of our social handicaps is the fact that more folks are inclined to be pessimistic toward new ideas, programs and services when first approached. We sometimes hesitate to explore the unknown; we shun away from changes in established patterns. But, it is a strong and respected employee services director who must persevere with the new ideas and give new twists to established programs; a company only drowns in stagnant waters.

Bad Weather Precautions

Lightning takes the lives of millions of people annually. One of the most frequent areas for lightning to strike is in open spaces and on beaches. In the summer months when more people spend time enjoying the outdoors, unexpected storms claim the lives of many. When outdoors, avoid standing under trees during a storm as trees attract lightning and if you are on a golf course, don't hold your metal clubs.

Bulletin board notices with precautionary information on high winds, tornadoes, lightning, flash floods and exposure to sun, heat and sub-normal temperature conditions should be posted seasonally. Many lives could be saved if employees were made aware of emergency precautions to heed during bad weather.

Supporting "Stay Well" Programs

Today, more incentives are used to entice the employee to support the "Stay Well" theory. Some insurance companies offer lower premiums for persons actively concerned about their health. Some companies even contribute to the fees charged for various health programs of their employees while others provide more fitness activities in their total employee services program.

However, exercise, to a vast majority of people, means sheer discipline and hard work. Because of this, more emphasis is given exercise which involves both elements of fun and enjoyment. "Jazzercise" a series of movements set to music, aerobic dancing, square dancing and other forms of dance blend a perfect balance of fun and fitness. Fitness trails also provide enjoyment, including such action as crawling through a large tire, swinging over a creek on a rope and a host of other familiar activities. Swim clubs or swimming events can feature water games and exercise, emphasis is not given to routine or perfect performances, nor are competitive ideas aroused. All is done as entertainment rather than achievement.

Walking tours designed to overcome the strains and fatigue of jogging, may include stops at observation points, or an orientation to local history and nature spots, combining education with exercise. Another idea involves integrating many short-time games to form a complete program. Five minutes of basketball, one inning of softball or one hole of golf gives the athlete a variety of events to participate in without tiring of any one. A family bicycle trip that includes stops for

a picnic lunch, fishing, swimming or a round of miniature golf, is yet another possibility for an afternoon of fun and exercise activity. Or, include the whole family in a short horseback or mule train trip and arrange a gold panning event with pre-painted gravel to find at given points. By awarding those returning with the most "gold," attendance is sure to be great.

All of these activities require bending, walking, stretching, jumping or movement enough to make exercise a fun venture. An enjoyable, healthful activity such as these is certain to gain the support of many employees.

Crafts and Hobby Instruction

Popular with many employees and their families are classes, lectures and clubs involving various hobbies and crafts. In larger communities, universities, "Y"'s, museums and community recreation departments are sources to seek assistance from for instruction and program offers. These sources can provide special classes for your people, send instructors to your facility or help you obtain the knowledgeable people you need.

Crafts and hobby interests that can foster special interest groups within your employee association include: beginning oil painting, sculpture, woodcarving, ceramics, quilting, weaving, knitting, calligraphy, silk screening, jewelry making, gardening, leathercraft and garment making. Model trains, cars, airplanes, ham radio, photography, antiques, china painting, glass blowing, stamps and coins, collectibles, stereo tapes and recordings are other interest possibilities. A special interest group can be formed with as few as five enthusiastic employees. Once the group gets started, a little promotional effort will be all it takes to increase participation. After hobby and crafts groups are formed, there are opportunities to stage exhibits, contests and hobby shows annually. Awards can be distributed and recognition given to those who excel.

A program of this nature has the potential to appeal to a great number of interested employees who will readily seize the opportunity to develop and polish their often hidden talents.

What Have You Done with Music?

Hardly a home in the U.S.A. is without a television, radio or stereo. More young people every day are being exposed to the joys of greater music involvement. It may be wise, in this case, for the industrial recreator to appraise his or her program by asking the question: "Where is the music?" Chorus groups, orchestras, bands, barbershop quartets, stereo clubs, talent shows, voice lessons, music appreciation clinics and sing-a-longs are all activities that may be enjoyed by your employees. There's room in every organization for a music director or a P.A. disc jockey specialist. A music talent bureau made up of employees offering their services to play the piano, organ, guitar or other instruments at various events would certainly add much to the entire program.

KEY NOTES

PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE RECREATION AND SERVICES

July 1981

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Staff Involvement

The worst possible situation for an employee to encounter is to ask a staff member for assistance or information about a program or activity and find that he or she is completely unaware of the activity or offer. Likewise, suppliers and promoters who make special arrangements for employee groups and then fail to inform their staff, cause much embarrassment and confusion to all involved. The employee services staff must be coached in not only the details of an activity, but also in how to gracefully accept criticism and complaints. Not unlike a good sales clerk in a department store, staff members must come to realize that their product is people. Once an employee becomes dissatisfied with the service, they often avoid any future contacts with the staff. This is damaging as it tends to discourage others from consulting staff members. The feeling can spread as an epidemic which is difficult to remedy. The choice of staff personnel in the employee services area requires the greatest attention for placements. If there is any position more important to establishing employee harmony, it is in this sector of personnel. Companies can't afford to have round pegs in square holes even on a temporary basis.

River Rafting -- A Popular Sport

There's an ever-increasing number of river raft companies that offer a variety of water tours. At one time, only the expert swimmer and thrill adventurer could take to the sport of fighting white waters. Today, however, a variety of raft trips exist for even the most cautious. What's more, these offers are springing up all over the United States and Canada. Wherever there's a river that offers excitement or scenery, you'll find canoes, rafts and floats. This popular sport can be enjoyed by people of all ages.

The Employee Market: Different From Other Sales Approaches

Associate members of NIRA enjoy a windfall of business from sales to employees of member companies. Unlike the general public market, however, it has some cautions to consider when anticipating sales. One complaint or dissatisfaction can snowball throughout the employee group creating a decline in sales almost instantly. The lack

of promotional assistance and close follow up with the directors can result in fewer sales and poor responses. Management and employee organization officers become leery of cooperating with all suppliers and promoters when just one proves to be a point of dissatisfaction and complaint.

The employee market is special. It is the least expensive to promote for the volume of sales possible, but it is also the most delicate to administer and maintain. Losing one public market sale has little effect upon the total sales anticipated, yet one loss of confidence in the employee sector can spread over the entire sales effort with devastating results for the supplier and the organization making the offer.

Unique Programs for Employees and Their Families

Exclusive Museum Tours and Refreshments --

Arrangements can be made with various art and natural history museums for special after-hours tours and receptions. The curator at most cooperating museums will help you develop an interesting and educational guided tour concluding with a lecture, movie or staged presentation at which time refreshments can be served to conclude the program.

Special Zoological Gardens or Park Tours --

The director of the local zoo can be most helpful in working with your committee to offer a behind-the-scenes tour of the zoo. The bakery, food preparation room, hospital and nursery are but a few of the areas which can be visited. Actually handling some of the animals make the tour even more appealing. The program can take the theme of a safari, and where possible, conclude with an open barbecue lunch or dinner on the grounds. The committee may arrange for photos to be taken with various birds and animals at nominal prices with the proceeds given to the zoo to supplement purchases of new animals.

A Visit to a Court of Law --

When Law Day is observed by many communities, the opportunity to meet with judges, see a court in action, visit the jail, crime lab and police academy is possible to arrange. The bar association in your locality can be most helpful in assisting your committee in such program planning.

The Inner Working of a Hospital --

It is possible to arrange an evening of interesting and educational programs that most hospitals can set up as a community enlightenment program. The director or chief of staff can help you plan such a program at a time when your people can attend and the hospital can best conduct a visitation tour to get acquainted with their various departments and supervisors.

The University Tour --

Here is a most interesting program to offer your people. There is so much to see and hear that often it must be arranged in a series of tours and receptions. The various schools of the university -- drama, music, art, recreation, health, business, astronomy, physical education and so on, all have opportunities to assist your committee in arranging special sessions and receptions that are most enjoyable. Contact the community relations director or external affairs director of the university for assistance in setting up such a program. Also, talk to the continuing education director, usually a separate operation of the university that is most interested in recruitment and promotion of their services.

For the Beginner: Walk Don't Run

A recent note in the Wall Street Journal stated, "Israeli researchers have found walking a half hour daily with a seven pound backpack improved the work capacity of volunteers by 15% in three weeks. Other researchers are working to reduce the number of joggers' injuries." We have stressed the values of walking in various issues of Keynotes and believe a brisk two to three mile walk is sufficient for the majority of people.

Walking is a safer sport for the beginning athlete as it holds a low risk to muscle and cartilage injuries. Anyone out of shape who begins a new exercise program by jogging several miles can cause serious physical damage. Though jogging is an equally good mode of fitness, more studies reveal that the non-athlete should get in shape prior to stepping on the joggers' path.

Facts & Fiction in Weight Training

"Weight training can reduce the risk of injury, improve performance in sport, and help maintain lean body mass as one gets older," according to Fred Allman, M.D., president-elect of the American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine.

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports reports that weight training is not a panacea, but when done in combination with other activities, is an effective method of improving fitness, particularly the components of muscle strength, endurance and power. The strong, well-conditioned athlete is the individual least likely to be hurt and the one who will recover most quickly from injury.

Dr. Allman dismisses as myths the beliefs that weight training inhibits flexibility or builds masculine-type muscles on women. Only about one woman in 20 he believes, can develop bulky muscles similar to those developed by men, and weight training exercises done through the full range of motion actually improves flexibility.

Program Failures

Even unsuccessful events or projects provide a learning experience and an opportunity to learn from our mistakes. An unsuccessful program doesn't really fail because it opens the way to improve, stimulate, change and challenge. It provides an added insight to future selections of programs, their leadership and procedures to follow. Too often we look for an easy excuse to dismiss a poor performance. After each undertaking, we should analyze the reasons for success or failures and apply them to our philosophies in the future. By actively learning from past mistakes, a person develops skills which carry over to other endeavors such as business management and personal development.

Promotion

"Nothing happens until somebody sells something" is a slogan of a national sales executive association. To build a successful operation, be it a product, service, someone must undertake a thorough promotional job. How well the message is delivered can be related to the sales, participation, or attendance gained. Write to N.I.R.A. for "The Inside Story of Promotion," a N.I.R.A. guidebook. \$1.00 per copy.

The Most Popular, Highly-Attended Activity

Without question, more people attend picnics, cookouts, banquets, luncheon programs and socialize over a meal, snack or refreshment than any other group activity. Yet, in a great majority of recreational facility plans and construction, the kitchen and dining room receive the least attention and usually the most inadequate accommodations. The clubhouse that neglects to have adequate food preparation and serving facilities reduces its potential use by 60% or more. Neither can a gym be substituted as a banquet hall nor a dining room double for a basketball court. The two are just not compatible to each other.

Although the banquet hall facility serves many leisure time activities, these activities almost always involve some food or refreshment service, for without it, the activity held would suffer. One of the common drawbacks of providing this facility is its control and operation. A volunteer operation of food preparation and serving presents a host of problems; therefore, as we find the need for a lifeguard at the poolsite, a gardener for our grounds, a coach for our teams, so must we find a supervisor for this facility and service. Like all other facilities, the greater use comes only through programming and promotion. Many a recreational club house with food service available is not only used for recreational events but becomes an employee service benefit as a lunch room. Management, too, finds use for it for their meetings, seminars and business activities. Together, both company management and the employee recreation management are brought together in an excellent partnership of facility use and interest. We highly recommend more attention be given to new construction and remodeling toward this purpose.

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Non-Profit Employee Associations can be Fined by IRS

If your employee association has a non-profit status with the Internal Revenue Service, it is required to submit tax forms each year. The tax exempt status should be carefully studied, as many non-profit organizations are amazed to find penalties imposed upon them by the IRS for numerous reasons. A wise administrator has a tax expert review the tax forms before he submits them. Some of the practices your organization may be engaged in could result in considerable legal involvement. It's always better to seek advice on questionable areas than to proceed with an operation that could be questioned by the IRS. Where is your money being spent and used as a non-profit organization? When does income represent profits? Which welfare benefits are being offered? These are some of the questions which may arise.

Fewer Dollars for Recreation and Services

Each year the cost of providing recreation and employee services increases. This puts a strain on directors who are adjusting their budgets to meet their needs. Often the first cutback in allocations affect the areas that seem less important to management. Yet, employers also need to carefully review programs which can be trimmed without totally damaging the activity. Companies have stressed the importance of employer/employee cost-sharing and believe all the programs can be reviewed with this in mind. Thus, employers can still offer a complete agenda of activities to the employee, which is still far less expensive than he or she could expect to obtain elsewhere. This becomes even more attractive and beneficial without lowering the quality or eliminating the activity.

The Camping Clubs

There are many different styles of camping, and many people have an interest in this leisure activity which offers so much variety. Some enjoy backpacking with tents and sleeping bags into the wilderness or a park, while others prefer recreational vans and camperettes which offer more of the creature comforts of home. Still other individuals bunk in pre-constructed shelters and simple cabins.

To create interests for novices, campers can arrange overnight outings as a group activity with rented tents and a chuck wagon food provision, all under the leadership of a seasoned camper who performs much like the old trail boss of those fascinating western movies. Some parks provide overnight accommodations with more modern lodging that can spark the interest of a family to graduate to the more rugged adventures of camping out. Camping clubs, therefore, are gatherings of all types of campers, and their programs and introductions of preparations, sites and experiences are spellbinders for all who attend. Each sector of camping activities becomes a part of the total council or camping clubs, and creates a fellowship which attracts others who want to share those experiences with them.

A campout morning breakfast or wilderness lunch is also a promotional means of attracting new members to the club which should pique their interest in the great outdoors.

Educational Opportunities for Employees

More and more companies are providing financial assistance for employees desiring advanced education, and such assistance should also be considered to be beneficial to the company. The degree to which the extended educational program will benefit both employee and employer may well determine the amount of financial aid given.

A large segment of extended educational opportunities, which do not necessarily relate to the accredited courses taken in a university or college are also available to employees. These educational programs may be offered on company sites with nominal instructional fees paid by the company. Such courses are usually of short duration, are not accredited and do not provide funds to the participants. Courses in business letter writing, public speaking, refresher English, math, accounting and customer relations help the interested participants improve their efficiency on the job and increase their promotional opportunities.

Other instructional courses pertaining to self-enjoyment and life-fulfillment offer instruction in sports, hobbies and crafts to broaden interests and encourage greater camaraderie. Courses in personal hygiene, dress and manners are also beneficial and rewarding.

Most employers need to know more about employee educational levels and how to raise them. Many employees lack knowledge of business basics and the free enterprise system. If employees are not properly informed through the school system, then industry may have to provide such enlightenment.

Climb a Mountain, Explore a River, Visit with Mother Nature

Groups of employees are always eager to get together for a wilderness adventure. From rafting to camping out, Mother Nature has more in the program offerings than can be scheduled, and it's great fun for

the family to explore all the possibilities of outdoor experiences. Some universities now offer instruction and courses in wilderness adventure. Recreation directors can obtain and offer considerable information and programs by checking with a university, an outdoor sports editor, a supplier of camping and backpacking equipment, a national or state park programmer, or even a travel agent. However, we do believe that you can't fool Mother Nature, so experienced guidance and direction is essential to the program.

Dental Care Important

Some employers offer programs which include sessions on dental care. Many physical discomforts or ill health are direct results of improper dental care. In addition to preventing cavities in children's teeth, fluoridated water may help prevent some ailments of aging, aching backs, easily broken bones and hardening of the arteries, according to Dr. Frederick J. Stare, Chairman of the Department of Nutrition at Harvard University's School of Public Health. His recent studies also suggest that adults, especially older adults, may have more to gain from proper use of fluoride than children. Far too many adults neglect their teeth with improper brushing and cleaning, infrequent checkups and inattention to the aging processes of the teeth and gums.

The rate of absenteeism as a result of dental problems has not been studied to our knowledge, but we are convinced that the figure would be alarming. Consult your local dental association, and consider offering information and lectures on dental health as an essential part of your physical fitness program.

Self-Defense Everyone Should Know

During recent wars, the armed services had little time to train personnel in self-defense, but they were able to demonstrate simple techniques that recruits could learn quickly. The recruits often learned mere surprise actions which were not always expected by the one being attacked. Police, army and navy training instructors are now familiar with these actions as well as the more elaborate techniques in karate, judo and weapons handling. Criminal psychologists also have devised methods of diverting an assailant's attention by conversation and trickery. A program which provides this type of information attracts both men and women and could save a life.

Auxiliaries of the Industrial Recreation Association

We do not rule out auxiliaries for organizations but do favor a strong family-related program which leaves fewer objectives for establishing an auxiliary. In business and industrial circles, we feel that a majority of the recreational and service programs offered to employees should include their immediate families in some manner. Offering committee assignments to employee family members and allowing them to contribute to the total program builds for greater appreciation and more participation. With both the employee and his or

her family taking part in the activities, employers can offer more diversified activities and establish a new communication link, profitable for the employee, his or her family and the company management as well.

Fun and Healthful - Square Dancing

Good, old-fashioned square dancing is an enjoyable exercise, and square dance clubs are becoming more and more popular. However, clubs should always provide opportunities for beginners and for new groups to form, as the more experienced parties remain together and branch off as separate square dance clubs, under the parent organization. When broken up into a series of square dance groups meeting at different times, they remain small enough for their members to become acquainted and comfortable with each other. Small groups up to four or five squares are able to find ample facilities. Yet, larger groups often find difficulty in securing halls large enough for all of their squares.

Employee Communications

The lack of communication between employees and management is a basic reason for poor employee relations, and it has many detrimental effects upon morale, loyalty and productivity. Communication takes on many avenues of approach and means. It is not a one-way street, nor is it confined to a limit of exposure. Employee activities must be part and parcel of the total communication system. Likened to any other medium of promotion, it becomes an element of attraction and anticipation which stimulates and ties in various informative items and interest. When used professionally, the system proves its effectiveness by benefiting both management and employees. Every idea, every proposal, regardless of its nature, must be handled as a sales approach. This requires expert technical handling, as does a product sale and customer relations operation. Employers should view their employees in a similar light and use this knowledge of salesmanship in producing results that are profitable in their endeavors of "people products." All employees in the corporate structure are internal products for productivity and profits, and employers have much to learn and relate in educational matters in order to accomplish their goals. Newsletters, bulletin boards, displays, meetings, internal newspapers, public address systems, mail to the homes, promotional tie-ins with other media sources, and employee/employer associations or clubs are basic communication sources to carefully appraise and use to your best advantage. The greater your contacts become, through employee activities and personal relations, the quicker you will begin to see results.

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Aiding Management in Supervisory Selections

An increasing number of companies are looking more intently into their own ranks for future management leaders. As employee services administrators and recreation directors, you are in one of the best areas to observe employees who have potential management leadership capabilities. Those people assigned to committees and offices of the employee recreation association can easily be observed for managerial possibilities. If they, as volunteer leaders, can manage well in an activity or as an organization officer, and have the ability to recruit followers, these alone are qualities of a supervisor worth noting.

How well a person follows through with the assignments required, and how well he or she delegates tasks and obtains results from those assigned, are other factors of appraisal. The element of flexibility in working with others, willingness to pass credits onto those who have performed well, and their own attitude toward self-recognition and self-grandstanding is most important.

What business sense and ingenuity do they put forth in their performance as a leader? Are they strong enthusiastic communicators who are able to excite and influence others? If all of these questions are answered in the affirmative, they will certainly point out to you a person who should be considered for future leadership opportunities. Therefore, you have an obligation to let it be known that you may have just the person some department is looking for; and at least give them an opportunity to be interviewed. Your function is not only to provide extra curricular activities for your people, but to further their opportunities in the association or company for their personal gains. These, in turn, are benefits you alone can offer to make your job one of greater importance to the company, and more rewarding for those whom you recommend.

Once Isn't Enough

Whatever activities or service you provide for your employees, telling them about it once is not enough. More programs fail from improper promotion, publicity, or communications than any other cause. First, everyone should know that a program is being offered and then should be stimulated to inquire, sign up, join, or purchase. Prospective participants should be reminded of what they will be missing if they don't

become involved. At the same time, let all promotion carry some credit line or phrase. Only because your company has offered these benefits is there an opportunity for participating in the first place.

Professional promotion managers and advertising agents will tell you it takes more than one letter, one posting, one sign, one broadcast over TV or radio; it takes continuing reminders to get top results. They will also point out that certain types of media publicity may not always be the most effective in getting results. The old adage, "the customer knows best," does not always apply in promotion. A vast number of people must be motivated, introduced, educated and reminded often in various ways before any action occurs.

Yet, one of the higher costs of employee services is promotion and communication. This is not the area to decrease costs, but usually the one to plan on increasing. We often are amused at some business tendencies -- when sales are high, participation great, and profits are building up, advertising usually is going full force. Yet, it is needed most in times of slumps and declining general operations in order to increase sales. In the employee relations area, most of the personnel problems occurring among employees and management can be related to the lack of good communication and promotion of programs, policies, new ideas, changes in procedures, benefits and activities. Your ideas, your programs, your services are only as good as they are communicated and promoted.

Fall of the Year Activities

Autumn always stimulates increased attendance in more activities than almost any other time of the year. It ushers in the bowling season for many company leagues, and the beginning of wintertime sports. Some popular activities you might consider sponsoring during this season are: Oktoberfest--A rousing, singing, dancing and entertainment event which features German foods and refreshments. Oktoberfests are excellent adult activities. Las Vegas or Millionaire Party--Play money is issued to engage in a variety of games of chance. Heavy winners have the opportunity of participating in the merchandise and food auction later in the evening. Those whose luck was poor can trade their small winnings at the Hock and Junk shop for various items of exchange. Feather or Harvest Fair Party--Another adult event which features bingo and provides poultry and food items as winnings. At the break, refreshments are served, and entertainment is offered. Ice Skating Party--A family event which features various rounds of skating to music, and at the break, offers exhibition skating along with free popcorn and soft drinks for all spectators. Challenge Circus--A series of game activities played at one time, or in sequence on a large gym floor. Runner-up table tennis, runner-up basketball toss, golf-putting contest, rope-climb contest, clowning and weightlifting are some of the events. At the break, a volleyball game is played to determine the winners. Should there be a running track, an exhibition of top runners is featured. Home Show |

and Food Fair--Everything from bake sales to fashion and home appliances are featured. This is an opportunity for merchants to display their wares and employee groups to sell hobby items, including refreshments and food items. Door prizes are awarded and a merchandise bidding session is held for some items on display. A fast food area can also be set up to sell hot dogs, popcorn and soft drinks. Fall and Winter Fitness and Fun Night--An exhibition promoting the importance of keeping healthy all winter and enjoying it. Demonstrations of slimnastics, dancercise, karate, aerobic dancing, simple exercises, eating to keep fit, things to do at home and at work to avoid stress can be provided. Conclude with refreshment period of healthy and natural foods. Dinner-Dance Party--A theme dance like Harvest Hits, Country Times, or Western Roundup will add color and stimulate ideas to make a dinner-dance more attractive. The dinner can be featured at a bargain price with a limited number of guests to further increase attendance. Corn Roast or Hot Tamale Party--An annual outdoor party in the fall often wraps up a summer's schedule of activities, and can be a major attraction if well planned and directed. Hayrides, group sing-alongs, fireside theatres, trail rides or hikes, snipe hunts and treasure hunts will add to this evening fun.

A Human Services Directory

The 1980, July/August news bulletin of the American Association of Retired Persons asked the questions: "Does your community need a Human Services Directory?" and "Have you ever attempted to find help for a human or health problem in your telephone directory, but couldn't locate the number or exact name of the agency?" The article suggests that if community members have had this problem and do need a human services directory, they could form an advisory committee and attempt to provide such a service.

The author further states that in order to assist communities in this endeavor, R.H. Hawthorne, a consumer consultant for the State of Pennsylvania, has compiled a prototype of listings, with particular attention devoted to the needs of older persons, so that directory assistance operators may offer faster service especially in emergencies. Hawthorne's directories and "how to" pamphlets are available free of charge by writing her at the State Department of Health, Division of Health Education, P.O. Box 90, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120. Include a stamped, self-addressed long envelope. Telephone companies such as Bell of Pennsylvania are also planning to incorporate such listings into their directories as a public service.

The AARP News Bulletin is another excellent publication to review. Employee services and recreation directors can obtain an application for AARP membership by writing AARP, P.O. Box 2400, Long Beach, CA 90801, and by indicating your involvement in senior citizens' employee groups.

Associate and Organization NIRA/NESRA Members

Both NIRA/NESRA associate and organization members receive benefits from NIRA/NESRA which apply to their members. The associate member is one of the best sources of membership communications for both organizations because it is in close contact with most members which provide services or products and observe the various employee services and recreation operations.

Only when organization and associate members try to establish a relationship which provides mutual benefits, do the advantages and profits occur. If what is offered is not profitable for each, then it should not be accepted or proposed. Most employee services directors or recreation managers function as a middleman between employees and suppliers. Whatever they accept or purchase must be promoted or sold to a third party -- the employees. Therefore, the selling techniques and promotional help that is shared affects its successes. In addition, one must also evaluate the benefits derived by the company or association.

Visit Industries' Programs

Many industries offer visitor tours. A charter bus trip, a stop for lunch, and then a tour through a factory and back to your recreation area for refreshments or dinner can be very enjoyable. This type of program is most popular as an adult family outing, and is especially attractive for company retiree groups. Within a radius of 100 miles, there may be many companies that would host your group. And when you run out of factories to visit, look for historical attractions, university campuses, museums, parks, gardens, zoos, wineries and breweries. A narrator or bus-tour leader can make these trips more enjoyable by pointing out various attractions and historical sites enroute, briefing the group, and offering refreshments. One clever chairman, having a number of tours arranged for the year, gave bus tickets with lottery numbers so that a drawing for a free tour was given away each time.

Conference Tapes Available

Expand your professional library with tapes of the major educational sessions of NIRA/NESRA's 40th Annual Conference and Exhibit: "Employee Services and Recreation: Its Economic Impact." See the July, August and September issues of RECREATION MANAGEMENT Magazine for complete details or contact NIRA/NESRA for a list and order form: 20 N. Wacker Suite 2020, Chicago, Illinois 60606. Phone: (312) 346-7575.

KEY NOTES

PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE RECREATION AND SERVICES

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Encourage Employees to Vote

When elections fall far short of a 50% turnout of eligible voters, our entire free enterprise and democratic system of government is in jeopardy. As Employee Services Directors, every effort should be made to promote voter registration and stimulate the privilege of voting. It is the simplest method of being heard and asserting one's own beliefs and interests. Too often a small organized group of voters can influence the results that non-voters gripe and complain about. The ballot box is our way to voice approvals or opposition regarding candidates for office, issues, and propositions. Talk to your election board officials on ways and means to increase voter participation. Ask your management how they too can help in promotional costs to achieve this goal.

Home Handyman Classes

Home handyman classes can teach you how to be your own maintenance man or woman for simple home repairs like repairing leaking water faucets, replacing electrical cords and switches, replacing a wall electrical switch or outlet, repairing broken windows, cleaning carpets and upholstery, lubricating appliances and cleaning your own furnace, fans, air conditioners and appliances. Often, a service call for such simple jobs which almost anyone could do can cost ten times more than the actual parts required if a professional service person is called in to do the job. Yet, vocational school teachers, maintenance personnel from your own company, or other employees knowledgeable in such minor repairs could be asked to offer instruction and demonstrations. Such instruction would be most helpful for women who are sole home wage earners and men who have never had the opportunity to learn how to use tools. A series of homeowners' painting and decorating sessions might also be well received. Limit the class size to not more than 20, and offer a bibliography of home repairs and decorating books available at the local library for those who want an extra reference source. A small registration charge should be made for such instruction, and the proceeds used to offset instructional costs and supplies.

Outdoor Camping Popular

Select a site and organize an autumn campout weekend. Rent tents and campers, and offer special prices if there are enough participants. A chuck wagon can be arranged for setting up a campfire banquet. Some metropolitan parks will assist in providing hikers' guides, naturalists and program ideas for the group.

A Room for Exercise

We should all exercise everyday, and should involve all members of the family. Therefore, what better place for exercise than one's own home; a basement or spare room can provide an exercise facility to accommodate pieces of exercising equipment. And now, because of the growing publicity given to the need for regular exercise, architects are designing houses to include exercise rooms. They are usually located adjacent to the informal family room and away from formal living or dining rooms, thus enabling them to be left in a "lived in" condition.

However, like any other health program, proper instruction and use is necessary. Never be your own judge concerning which exercises to do or the time required to do them. Seek medical and therapeutic advice before engaging in an all-out exercise program. Here again, the recreation association would be very beneficial in giving sound guidance and advice. In addition, diet and eating habits play just as important a part in the total health programming, and again, professional guidance is advised.

Decentralization of Employee Services in Multi-Unit Companies

The purpose of administering employee recreation and services programs is to improve relationships between management and employees. In this regard, management is the immediate and localized supervision. An employee organization cannot be classed in the same category as that of a fraternal or civic organization. The objectives for each are entirely different and can in no way imitate each other.

The success of the industrial employee association rests solely with the employees' management in each location. There may be a centralized outline of procedures to follow, but the operation itself must remain decentralized in order to be effective. For multi-unit companies in any one given area, each plant or office location has a family unto itself. This identity is a major factor in building pride and even competitive interests between locations. When the operation becomes independent of the localized management, there may be a danger that employees will no longer feel that a communication link exists between themselves and their management.

Some multi-unit activities and facilities can be jointly entered into or used, but always on a separatist agreement concept, with one or the other taking the administrative role for that occasion or

program. If the company is to have any improvements of morale or cooperation, the organization and programs must develop and remain in the employees' locality, for the most part. When two or more local stores, plants or offices try to combine as one unit of employee services and recreation, it becomes as much an outside organization as the YMCA or YWCA which serves the entire community. Yet, problems can be magnified when employee and management contacts become even more distant and unrelated.

First Aid Classes are a Must

Companies should offer first aid classes, including instructions in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and the Heimlick maneuver on an annual basis. The American Red Cross and local medical bureaus will help to provide instruction or program guidance. Many health insurance companies have free booklets or instruction sheets which may be distributed and used in the classes. Blood pressure screening can also be provided, and instruction given in self-blood pressure reading, taking temperatures, pulse counts and simple breathing tests.

Taking the Difficulty Out of the Difficult

When announcements, programs or activities are offered to employees, we must be sure that the procedure to ask questions, obtain forms, sign up to participate, obtain a ticket or make a purchase is simple and uninvolved. All correspondence must have a source of origin listed, and a place or person to contact. The procedure to take part must be made easy. Confusion, standing in line, insufficient staff and uninformed people handling the details can cause difficulties which discourage participation and result in a loss of interest. Many fine promotional efforts are lost when at the point of contact, a lack of proper handling and available information exists. Sometimes, too many people are involved in the direction of an activity, causing untold errors, disruption and wasted time, which creates not only employee frustration, but also management's ridicule and possible discontinuation of the project.

Who's Doing What?

One company staged a monthly dinner meeting restricted to a given number of first-come participants. There was a nominal charge for the dinner and at each session a division or department of the company explained its function and future plans. Time for questions, and introductions of the managers and key people were provided. Every session was a complete sellout. People are interested in their company and strive to learn more about it. Here is an opportunity for employee services to make a double play--a benefit for the employee as well as for the company. All departments may be allotted a given number of tickets on a first-come request basis. Announcements could be posted on bulletin boards and printed in employee newsletters and in-house papers.

Programs in Conjunction with National and Local Educational Weeks

Such established promotional and educational days or weeks like Fire Prevention Week, Boat Safety Week, United Way and United Nations Day are opportunities to tie in to your own program scheduling. One recreation association staged an employee drive to bring fire prevention to the attention of its people during National Fire Prevention Week in October. An offer to purchase highly rated smoke alarms at a reduced price was one of the tie-ins. Other tie-in programs which have proven effective are bulletin board and newsletter articles outlining fire prevention practices which should be established at home and at work; window stickers indicating children's bedrooms, which firemen can see quickly; how to conduct an evacuation at home in the event of an emergency; what the common causes of fire are in the home, automobile and plant or office; and what type of extinguisher should be used for various fires. Almost every city has a fire prevention department which would be delighted to cooperate in such educational opportunities. Other drives and campaigns can also be further promoted by ties to your programming and informational media. Furthermore, it is also possible to stage your own promotional week or day covering such issues as physical fitness, Big Brother and Sister recruitment, recreation week, voter registration week, Mother's and Father's days, safety week, old eye-glasses for the blind week and many more.

The Employee Recreation Association

One of the greatest assets a company can have is an enthusiastic, cooperative work force. The employee recreation association or club can make a large contribution in this direction. It brings many benefits to any business. At the same time, the employees themselves are enjoying the values of inexpensive recreation, and opportunities for mutual help and self-expression. The association is more effective when it becomes a mutual, all-inclusive employment organization.

Both management and its people must also be enthusiastically involved in sharing the costs of the activities provided. The organization functions best when its departmental groups of people who work closely together, and provide a nucleus from which an overall association is governed. A set of objectives for the organization must also be developed, and employers and employees must clearly understand the goals of each objective.

ORDERED YOUR COPY OF THE NIRA/NESRA TEXTBOOK YET? "AN INTRODUCTION TO INDUSTRIAL RECREATION: EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES," MAY BE PURCHASED THROUGH NIRA/NESRA HEADQUARTERS FOR \$14.95 PER COPY PLUS POSTAGE AND HANDLING. WRITE NIRA/NESRA, 20 N. WACKER DRIVE, SUITE 2020, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60606. PHONE (312) 346-7575.

KEY NOTES

PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE RECREATION AND SERVICES

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HOLIDAY IDEAS

Holiday dances appear to be most successful when coupled with a dinner or floor show. The Christmas holidays are an ideal time for management to express best wishes and take an active part in committee assignments. Tables can be arranged by departments and a host chairperson appointed for each table or section. Even though this is often the busiest time of the year for most people, these activities always seem to draw the highest attendance ... Don't forget the little ones in your holiday party planning. Party ideas can range from puppet shows, movies, stage shows and specialty acts designed with the young in mind or be as simple as a visit from Santa and his helpers who stop by to distribute candy and gifts ... One unique pre-holiday activity you might consider is this: Invite representatives from local department stores, florists and craft boutiques to share their skills and ideas on holiday entertaining. Christmas crafts, floral arrangements and personal styles of giftwrapping and cardmaking are possible activities your guests could demonstrate.

PRECAUTIONS FOR EXERCISE

On very cold days, lifting objects without a short warming-up could precipitate a heart attack. Each year, thousands of people die needlessly because of sudden exertion. Any adult, especially those over 40, should be aware of the dangers related to vigorous activities like skiing, skating, chopping wood, jogging and shoveling snow. A lack of daily scheduled exercise can increase the dangers resulting from even short bursts of exertion. Even for those who are in good physical shape, a warm-up period prior to any vigorous exercise should be a standard procedure. Walking around quickly for two minutes or jogging in place indoors can help to condition the body for a longer period of physical activity. Of course, everyone should have regular physical check-ups and know their own limitations.

ESTABLISH A RESEARCH GROUP

It may be an interesting, beneficial and fun experience for a volunteer group to conduct various employee surveys on its own. If a psychologist can be obtained to help with composition, tabulation and review of the surveys, it can prove to be educational, fun and profitable for all who participate. Opinions on a variety of topics, work related or not, can be garnered: company policies, earnings, advertising, community activities, government procedures and sporting events are possible topics for investigation. The research group can then meet quarterly to review its findings, write up a report and submit it to the company or community newsletter for publication.

HOLD A PUBLICITY WORKSHOP FOR BEST RESULTS

We cannot overstate the importance of effectively promoting an activity. Most laymen who are elected to serve as publicity chairpersons are inadequately educated, experienced and skilled in preparing effective promotional material. You can improve the amateur in his or her role as publicity chairperson by conducting promotional, publicity and communication workshops.

A staff person should be assigned to assist the volunteer and help coordinate operations. Volunteers should always have an assigned staff person to report to and work with in order to accomplish the ultimate goals. Certain expenditures must be considered and approved: legal activities requiring investigation; evaluation of different types of communication media; restrictions concerning established policies on poster and ad sizes and styles. Actual promotional techniques which become part of the event or activity must be coordinated with the program itself.

FAMILY FORUMS

Consider offering a series of helpful educational seminars to your employees. These would be especially beneficial for young families just getting started. Topics may include the following:

- a. simple techniques of budgeting
- b. homeowners' protection
- c. check points for purchasing a home
- d. economy factors every family should practice
- e. what about taxes? How to keep records to avoid penalties
- f. buying a new or used car
- g. tips on child care
- h. emergencies and unexpected expenditures
- i. social services in the community
- j. child guidance
- k. investments and earnings
- l. property rights and the law
- m. continuing educational opportunities
- n. how to find competent health care professionals

TAX EXEMPTION FORMS

If your organization is non-profit and registered with the IRS as such, many purchases for the organization can forego sales tax. A blanket certificate of exemption is available either from the suppliers or your legal advisor. One will be required for each concern with which you are placing orders. The savings can amount to a considerable amount annually and should be reviewed to see if your organization qualifies for these exemptions.

EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES

Employee attitudes are the result of past management and are kept alive by current management. They can be cooperative or uncooperative; belligerent or harmonious; productive or non-productive. In any situation though, considerable effort is required by management and employees to change long-established relationships which nurture employee attitudes. Employee services, an important medium for harmonious attitude development is one means of improving employee relations. Services which reach the workforce through a variety of contacts may well be the strongest communication link for an enlightened management to explore.

LOSS OF HEARING

The loss of hearing is gradual. At first, one fails to hear the soft low tones, and later, even louder sounds become more difficult to distinguish. Hearing is measured by decibels. At 140 decibels, noise causes pain. One of the most common causes of a loss of hearing is the booming vibrations of loudspeakers, especially the home stereo set and the full volume of TV. Normal conversation is measured at 60 decibels and the average factory noise measures 85, but loudspeakers ushering out disco beats measure from 115 to 130 decibels. Amplified rock music also measures at 110. Compare this to a jet airliner takeoff at 100 feet that measures 120 decibels. Some authorities are already registering "disco deafness" on their medical examination records.

As employee services and recreation directors, we should recognize this hazard and consider amplification of music at events a serious matter, just as we evaluate the measurement of factory noises affecting our workers. This is another factor that becomes part of an effective physical fitness training program.

STAGE A PHOTO CONTEST FOR YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHERS

Arrange a contest for children 10 to 15 which would attract employees' children. Various subjects can be categorized to allow for a variety of awards. The photos can be exhibited and refreshments served at a special program on company grounds on the Awards Day. Amateur employee photographers can be selected as the program committee and judges selected from such a group. This brings into the activity more employee participation and also may result in an annual childrens' photo contest.

EMPLOYEE SERVICES CAN FURNISH AUTHORIZATION
FOR TREATMENT FORMS FOR MINORS

If your employees use neighbors and family members for baby-sitting services, it is essential that they have certificates of authorization from parents if hospital attention is required for that child. Without parental permission forms, the hospitals and many physicians may not administer any treatment or service for that minor until that child's parents are located and their consent is obtained.

A sample certificate of authorization may be obtained from most hospitals. It would be advisable to have many copies for your employees even if it requires your printing them for distribution. The usual form is worded as follows:

AUTHORIZATION FOR TREATMENT

I hereby give permission for use of such anesthesia and such medical or such surgical procedures as may, in the judgment of the attending doctor, be deemed necessary in the care of

Patient _____
Reason (Doctor will fill in) _____
Signature of Parent _____ Relationship _____
Address _____ Phone Number _____
Date _____ Witness _____
Notorization would also help. Notary _____

State any allergies of patient _____
Shots received (including tetanus) _____
Any medications being now administered _____
Any physical disorders prevalent _____
Name, address and phone number of family doctor _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____

BENEFITS FOR MILITARY VETERANS

Employee services directors should contact the nearest Veteran's Administration office to learn for their employees what benefits are provided to armed services veterans and their dependents. Veterans organizations like the American Legion, VFW and DAV can also supply information and services. Some of these organizations will provide speakers and set up consultation services. They can also aid beneficiaries of deceased veterans in obtaining benefits for which they are eligible. In addition, dental and medical care is provided by the VA for servicemen and service-women in accordance with set policies.

KEY NOTES

PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE RECREATION AND SERVICES

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NEW NAME FOR NIRA

As of January 1, 1982, the official name of our association will be the National Employee Services and Recreation Association -- NESRA.

Although recreation and employee activities remain a major function for better employee relations, there remain many other employee interests and participating services that have been overlooked by business organizations and institutions of higher learning. NESRA will fill this void while maintaining its leadership role for such services.

WHERE ARE YOU ON THE ORGANIZATION TABLE?

A recent issue of Personnel Magazine noted that one company requires its industrial relations manager and employee services manager to report directly to the vice president of Employee Relations. Another corporation's manager of recreation services reports to the medical director and the health services manager, who in turn report to the personnel administrator. Other companies' recreation directors report directly to the president, or to the vice president of public relations. On the majority of industrial organizational tables, however, we find these people reporting to personnel administrative managers or the labor relations directors. We would prefer to have the employee services and recreation directors report to the vice president of employee relations, or a vice president-level person.

Without professional guidelines and an understanding of the basic objectives for having the program, it could become the play toy of an executive, or be directed by a non-professional recreation and employee services director. Industrial recreation, coupled with employee services, should be recognized as an essential segment of personnel administration. The personnel staff, including recreation, must recognize that all of its programs must show, directly or indirectly, a bottom-line profit to and for the company and we are sure that they all can.

HOSPITALS CAN PROVIDE PROGRAMS FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Riverside Hospital of Toledo, Ohio is in the process of developing a center to help promote health. The hospital calls it Research for Health Center and plans to encourage local companies to use it as a model for seminar programs. Dr. George Randt, of Clearwater, Florida, will be joining the center as the medical director. The program will feature nutrition, exercise, stress control and living well. The new facility will house a running track, exercise equipment, a mini-kitchen, lecture rooms and will offer instruction on how to stay out of the hospital by sensible living that can be enjoyable.

THE FOOD SERVICE MYTH

When food service is offered to employees, it becomes another employee service, not a profit-making business venture. In fact, food service must be considered as an employee benefit, and some of the costs must be absorbed and figured into a company's employee benefits offerings. Whatever the service involves -- a cafeteria, restaurant or vending machine operation -- those items classified as food supplements for a meal should be offered at costs below outside or office restaurant prices. Supplemental refreshments such as candy, soft drinks and coffee sold through vending machines on a consistent basic service do not fall within the category of food service pricing.

Hardly any full-scale food service within an industry can operate at a break-even cost. If it did, the true expenditures involved would in most instances exceed the price of a meal offered in the public domain. Even when vending machine prices equal those charged outside of the company, refreshments are still carried into the plant or office, and numerous coffee pots perk away at the expense of vending machine operations.

BIG CHANGES IN HOW PEOPLE LIVE -- THE NEW OFFICIAL OUTLOOK

Recreation studies have shown that city and suburban residents have 11% more leisure time than they did a decade ago; that television has become the leading leisure-time activity; and that the average age of Americans is increasing, resulting in major fluctuations in demands for goods and services which are associated with persons at different stages in the life cycle. Other things are also very different for most Americans now than they were as recently as the 1950's and 60's. Families are becoming smaller -- 3.4 persons in 1975, as compared to an estimated 3 by 1990; life expectancy is longer; and 72% of Americans receive income from other sources than a full-time job. These include social security, welfare payments, dividends and interest checks.

Other favorite leisure activities include home and family activities, sports, visiting with friends, reading, movies, theatre, cards and games, dancing and listening to the radio. There is also a decided rise in volunteer work, indicating workers' desires to become more involved in society's needs.

HEALTH TIPS ON BULLETIN BOARDS

There's always room for bulletin board postings, as well as space for fill-ins from company newspapers or letters. Make use of all leftover space for a collection of physical fitness articles. Medical associations, dental associations, Red Cross, insurance companies, government printing offices, health magazines, company doctors and nurses, dieticians, hospitals and medical schools have a considerable collection of printed material to offer for such use. As an example: periodontal disease, often called pyorrhea, affects about 70 million adults in the USA, according to the National Institute of Dental Research. It often begins during adolescence, producing only a few troublesome symptoms until middle age. By the time one reaches 15 though, four out of five persons show some signs of periodontal disease progress, so that by age 40, it is responsible for 75 percent of all tooth loss. Most of the rest is due to tooth decay. Have your employees seen their dentists lately?

SPORTS INSTRUCTION BEING OFFERED

One recreation association in New York is offering a full agenda of sports instruction covering scuba diving, golf, racquetball, squash, horseback riding, tennis, bowling and sailing. It also offers instruction in social activity areas such as disco, ballroom dancing and backgammon. To keep activities growing and attracting new people, it is essential to offer instructional courses or beginners' events. For too long a time, activities, especially sports, have catered to the well-coordinated and experienced participants. The events become so highly competitive that very little opportunity for the novice exists. We find other areas such as square dancing and bridge also suffer from the same oversight. Opportunities for learning must always be offered, and then a place and program must be provided for beginners to practice what they have learned.

SKI CROSS-COUNTRY!

Cross-country skiing is a favorite form of ski touring which enriches the spirit as well as the body. Ski, 380 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017, publishes an inexpensive book, Guide to Cross-Country Skiing, which lists ski sites and references for equipment and techniques.

WHAT CAN WE OFFER AT THE NEXT SOCIAL GATHERING?

To make each of your programs more enjoyable, seek out short entertainment on a variety of subjects and actions. Too much of any one thing may tire an audience. Most acts or demonstrations should be confined to a maximum of 20 minutes, maybe shorter. A speaker that exceeds 30 minutes has to be exceptionally good and is indeed rare. An act that becomes repetitious can be entertaining for only a short time. The speaker who is both entertaining and informative is without a doubt the one that is in greatest demand. Only professional groups can appreciate the well informed educational speaker who presents his or her topic without entertaining elements.

The person acting as the chairperson or master of ceremonies can make a great difference in reflecting the audience reception and interest. He or she can also influence the time element, supply what the speaker lacks, stimulate questions and call for breaks and audience participation. Many times the program's success depends upon the expertise of the chairperson.

If the chairperson feels he or she does not have these skills, there is no harm in selecting a co-chairperson for assistance. Often a change of persons taking various segments of the chair increases the attention span of all present. Audience applause is not always an indication for a continuance of the act or speaker. Knowing when to shut off the applause and the question and answer period is also an important factor a chairperson should keep in mind.

WALKING -- THE ONE HEALTH SPORT THAT DOESN'T HURT

Beneficial exercise at a sensible pace is as close as the nearest sidewalk, says the director of the Walking Association, a unique organization dedicated to pedestrians (4113 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22207). Mr. C. Carson Conrad, executive director of the President's Council on Physical Fitness states, "within the next three years, walking will become the 'in' thing that jogging is today." The benefits of jogging or running can also be gained through sustained walking. While jogging may now be in vogue, the problems of running for exercise are numerous. Each time a jogger's foot hits the ground, the 26 bones and 19 muscles in the hoof are subject to shock waves that are transmitted from the heel up through the ankle, leg, knee, thigh, hip and back. The longer and harder the run, the more shock impacts will be received. This is especially true for those who are a bit out of shape or overweight. Repeated shock vibrations can throw the vertebrae out of alignment, thus raising the potential for lower back problems and sciatica. But brisk walking of four miles an hour is said to give the same benefits as running, without the problems inherent in jogging. Gradually increasing the walking pace by lengthening the stride will exert more energy.